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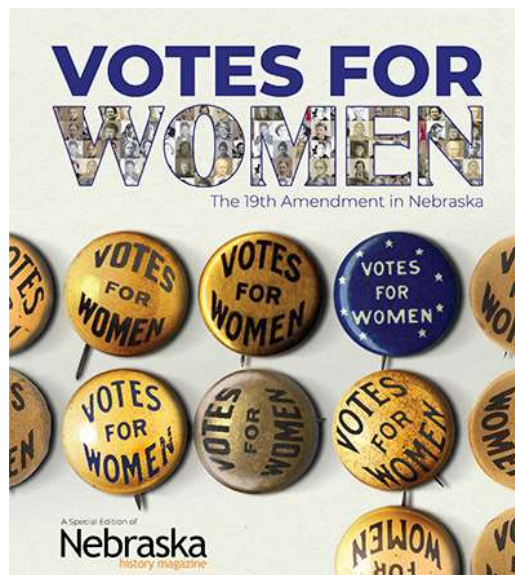
## ***Votes for Women* opens August 16**



A new exhibit at the Nebraska History Museum looks at women's long struggle for the right to vote. [\*Votes for Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story\*](#) opens August 16. The [exhibit opening](#), 5:00-7:30 pm, will feature historical re-enactments of notable suffragists. *Votes for Women* will be open through January 2, 2021.

Nebraska ratified the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment 100 years ago this August—though it took another year for the amendment to be ratified by the required three-fourths of states. But the struggle goes back a lot further. Amelia Bloomer gave a speech before the Nebraska Territorial Legislature in 1855, and Nebraska women built organizations, published newspapers, lobbied legislators, and worked closely with national leaders for decades before the tide began to turn in their favor.

***Votes for Women*** is also the name of our richly-illustrated new book, now available at the museum and [online](#).





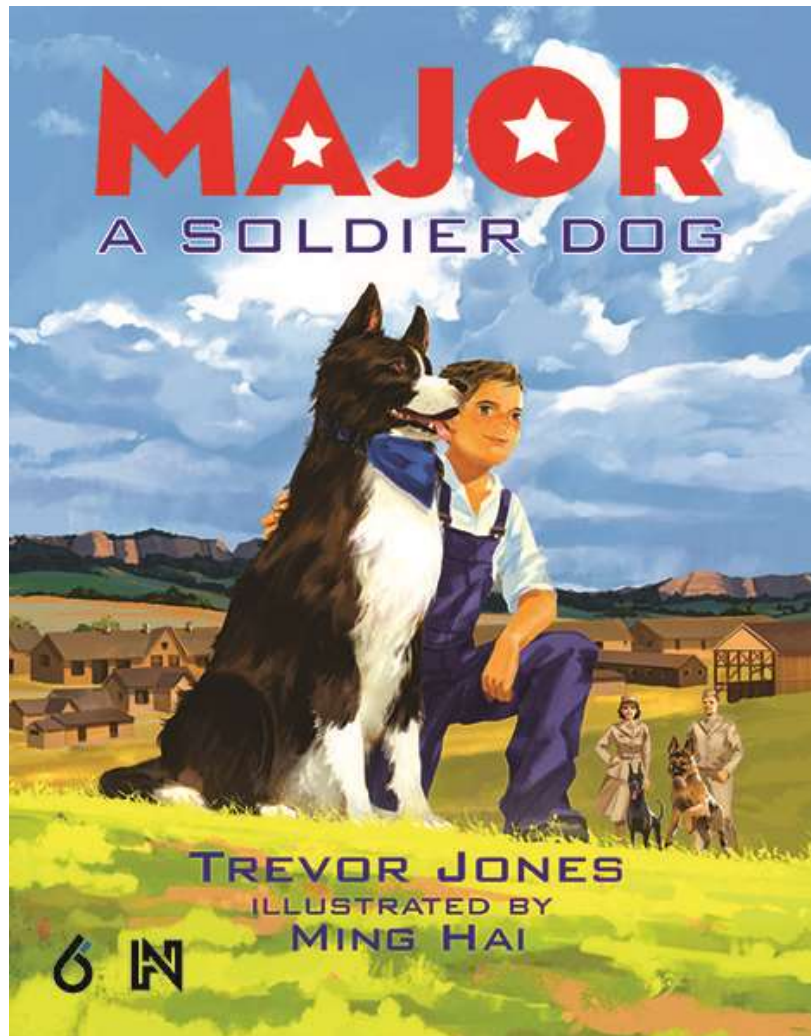
Governor Samuel McKelvie used this pen to sign the bill ratifying the 19th Amendment on August 2, 1919. [See more suffrage artifacts.](#)



## Why 12 Stars?

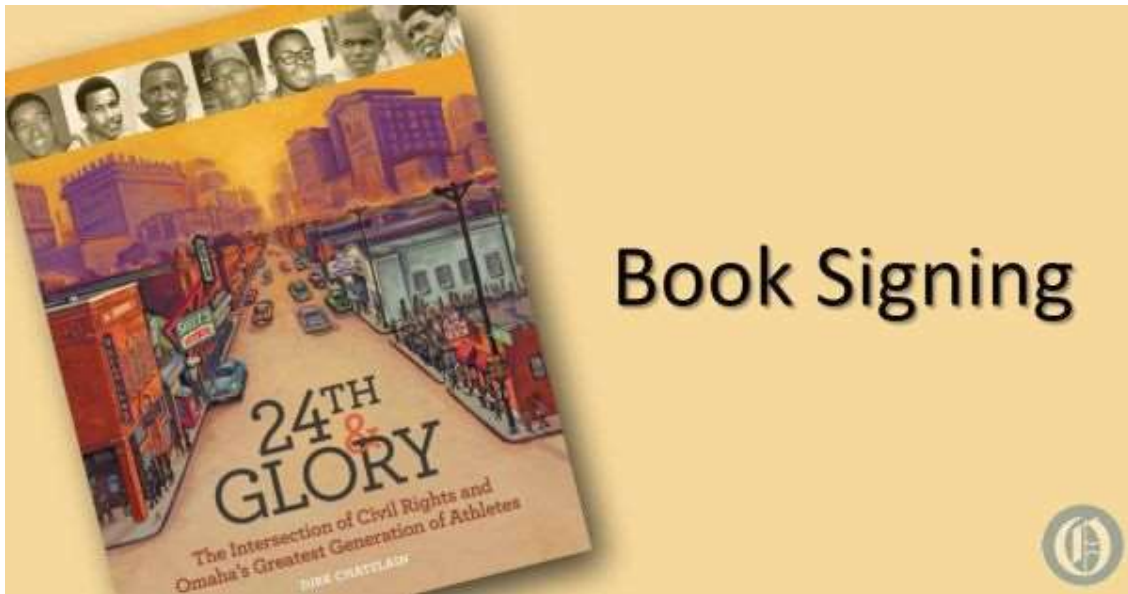
This flag (to be displayed in the exhibit) tells a story of the women's suffrage movement in the early 20th century. But why only 12 stars? And why were the stars applied using a variety of techniques? [Keep reading.](#)

## New kids' book tells Fort Robinson war dog story



A new children's book tells the story of a Nebraska-based World War II dog training program. Written by History Nebraska Director/CEO Trevor Jones, the story is told from a dog's perspective and filled with colorful illustrations based on a real dog and actual places and events. But did Major make it home again? [Keep reading.](#)

***24th & Glory* now available, events planned**



We've partnered with the *Omaha World-Herald* to publish Dirk Chatelain's new book, *24th & Glory: The Intersection of Civil Rights and Omaha's Greatest Generation of Athletes*. It was recently serialized in the *World-Herald*. Reader response has been enthusiastic ("an absolute journalistic home run," "I hope this series gets some national recognition," "masterfully written and weaves essential history worthy of being taught in Nebraska schools").

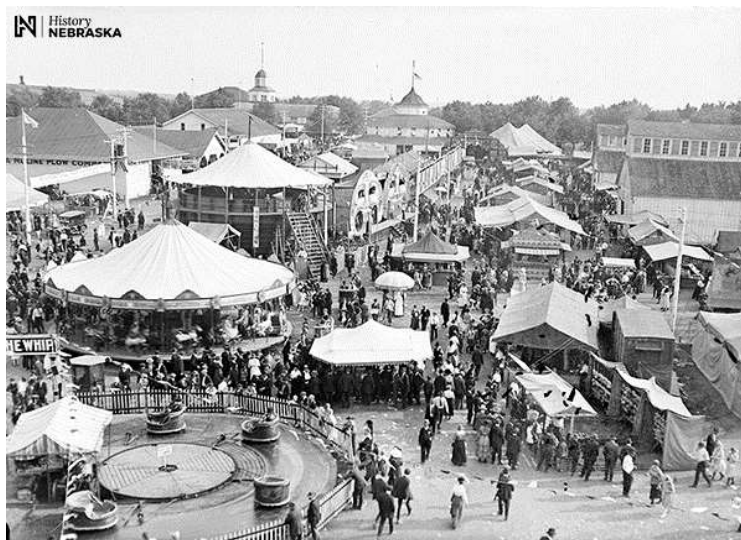
Preview the first few chapters and order the book [online here](#). If you're in Omaha, the author will be [signing books](#) today and on August 2 & 4. And we'll soon have copies for sale at the Nebraska History Museum.

## Nebraska State Fair in pictures





Nebraskans will soon celebrate the 150th Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island, August 23-September 2. Here are some of our favorite state fair photos from the History Nebraska collections. [Keep reading.](#)





## Upcoming events

Mad Science at the Museum continues! And Dr. Amy Forss lectures on Nebraska suffragist Grace Crandall Richardson. [Read more.](#)



*History Nebraska Newsletter*, August 2019 (Vol. 72, No. 8), David Bristow, Editor.  
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## [Votes For Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story](#)



2020 marks the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, which guaranteed women the right to vote. The struggle for women's suffrage in Nebraska had been going on for more than sixty years when Nebraska finally ratified the amendment on August 2, 1919. Strong and well-funded opposition included both men and women; they had blocked women's suffrage for many complex reasons.

Nebraska's suffragists were persistent and believed in making their Nebraska a better place. They were doctors, lawyers, educators, philanthropists, community volunteers, and others who worked diligently toward their vision of a better Nebraska. The suffragists' vision was not without bias and did not include suffrage for all. There were many struggles for equality for all Nebraskans both before and after ratification. This exhibit looks back at our state's unique place in the history of the women's suffrage movement, and some of the many women who broke barriers here.

## [Votes For Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story Exhibit Opening](#)

When: Friday, August 16, 2019 - 5:00pm to 7:30pm

Where: Nebraska History Museum

100 years ago, Nebraska was one of the first states to ratify the 19th Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote in the United States. However, the struggle for suffrage had been going in Nebraska for 60 years at that point. We're excited to be celebrating that women's suffrage story with our newest exhibit, [Votes For Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story](#).



Join us for the opening event of this amazing exhibit, featuring historical re-enactments of notable suffragists for a fully immersive look into the suffrage movement of the early 20th century. More event details below ↓

- See authentic banners, posters, clothing from this crucial civil rights struggle
- Learn about the women (and men) who worked for decades to win Nebraska's battle for the ballot
- Experience the passion and power of historic re-enactors depicting suffragists Clara Bewick Colby, Susan B. Anthony and Rheta Childe Orr
- Create your own suffrage slogan in our 1919 parlor
- Take a selfie on the suffrage float
- Uncover the suffragist legacy in today's political landscape
- Hear prominent Nebraska women reflect on the state's past and future.

There will also be refreshments, live music, and voter registration!

This event is free and open to all.

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## Nebraska Next: The Fight to Enfranchise Nebraska Women

March 9, 2018

The movement to enfranchise Nebraska women started as early as 1855 when suffragist Amelia Bloomer spoke before an audience in Omaha. Things heated up after Nebraska ratified the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1867. That year, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton traveled to Omaha to further the cause of woman suffrage, thinking Nebraska was poised to adopt legislation to allow women the vote. It was not to be, however, and woman's suffrage was defeated by Nebraska's voters at an 1871 constitutional convention.



Picture of a suffrage float in Blair, Nebraska in July 1914. Notice the "Nebraska Next" banner on the sign that is the same as the one pictured above.



This glass transparency would have been used with a lantern-slide projector prior to the 1914 general election.

In 1881, several local groups formed the statewide Nebraska Woman's Suffrage Association and that same year, during the regular legislative session, a bill was introduced to submit a resolution to Nebraska voters to strike the word "male" from the suffrage article of the Nebraska constitution of 1875 and replace it with the word person. The bill passed and was signed in February 1881 and the issue would be decided in November 1882.

The campaign for woman suffrage in Nebraska was on and by September 1882 there were more than 175 woman suffrage associations in the state. To further promote the cause, both the American Woman Suffrage Association and the National Woman Suffrage Association had their annual meetings in Omaha. However, despite the best efforts of all these groups, Nebraska voters rejected woman suffrage once again.

## Suffrage Songs

### NATIONAL SUFFRAGE SONG.

My country 'tis for thee  
To make your women free,  
This is our plea.  
High have our hopes been raised  
In these enlightened days  
That for her justice, praised  
Our land might be.

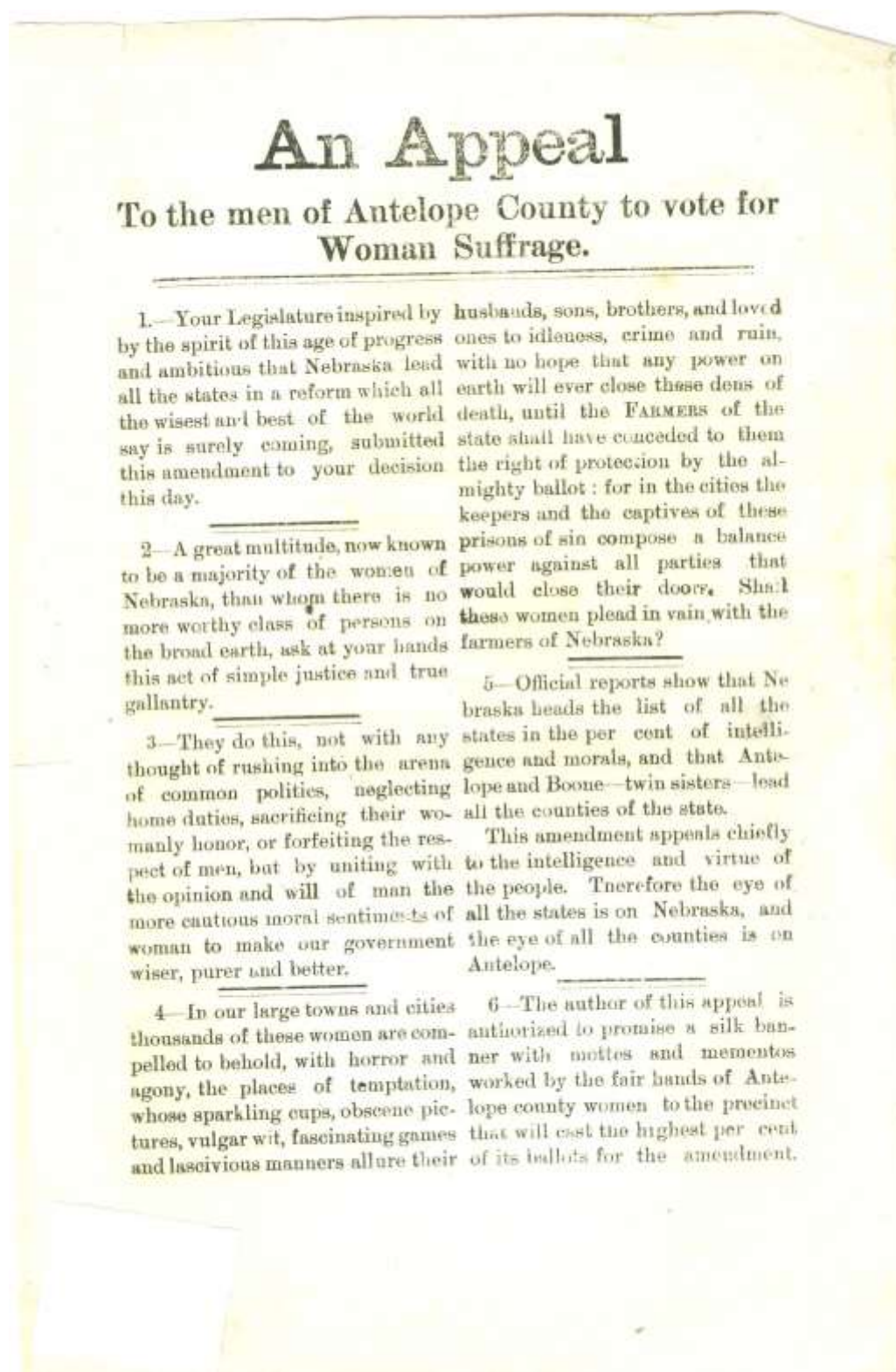
My native country thee,  
Grant us equality!  
Then we shall see  
In this fair land of light  
Justice and truth and right  
Ruling, instead of might,  
Truest liberty .

Our father's God, to thee,  
Author of liberty,  
To thee we sing;  
Long may our land be bright  
With freedom's holy light;  
Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God, our King.

Nebraska! Nebraska!  
She's all right,—  
Organized! Organized! And in the fight!  
Right up the stream we'll row our boat,  
For Nebraska women are bound to vote.



Front cover of a four-page booklet. Several songs have been adapted to the Nebraska cause as is visible on the bottom of this image.



Although the cause suffered another defeat in the 1914 general election, a big step forward occurred in 1917 when the Nebraska Legislature passed a limited suffrage act giving women the right to vote in municipal elections and for presidential electors. The success was muted, however, by opposition forces who filed a

referendum petition to allow the voters to overturn the bill. The petition was challenged by woman suffrage supporters and the issue was bogged down in the courts for two years. The referendum petition was eventually found to be fraudulent, but the point was practically moot as the Nebraska Legislature, in an August 1919 special session, unanimously ratified the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. A year later women were finally allowed to vote in all elections nationwide.



Banner that belonged to Dr. Inez Celia Philbrick who practiced medicine in Lincoln from 1893-1937. This banner dates from 1900-1917.



Governor Keith Neville signed the 1917 partial suffrage law with this pen.

The photograph and artifacts featured above are just a sample of the items relating to the movement to ensure a woman's right to vote in the Society's collection. More information about the woman suffrage can be found in our other online stories or in our collections.

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## 12-Star Suffrage Flag, 1911-1917

July 31, 2019





The first US flag had 13 stars. Why does this one have only 12?

This flag from the Nebraska History Museum collections bears a star for each of the states in which women had gained full voting rights. (States granting only limited voting rights—including Nebraska—did not earn a star.)

The stars are applied in a variety of techniques. Six are applied with large hand stitches, with the raw edge of the fabric exposed (the other stars have the edges turned under). On the flag's reverse side, the blue field is cut out behind these stars so that they are visible from both front and back. Of the remaining stars, three are applied with both machine and hand stitching, two with machine stitching only, and one with small hand stitching and whip-stitching around the edges. There is some variation in the stars' fabric as well.

Apparently different people added the stars year by year. The above groupings seem to match groups of states: California became the sixth state to grant women the vote in 1911, joining Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, and Washington. Next came Arizona, Kansas, and Oregon (1912); Montana and Nevada (1914); and New York (1917).

No further stars were added when Michigan, Oklahoma, and South Dakota joined the club in 1918. Perhaps this was due to World War I; the keepers of this flag may have been busy with Red Cross work by then. And after the war, suffragists' focus was no longer on state voting rights, but on the state-by-state ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

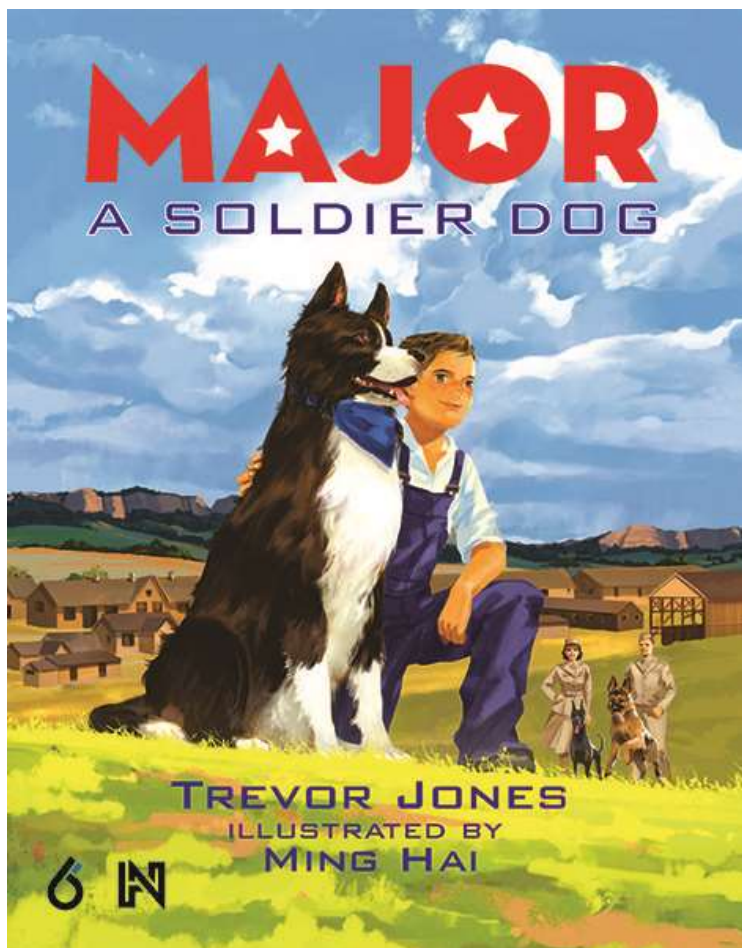
This flag is displayed as part of [\*Votes for Women: Nebraska's Suffrage Story\*](#), an exhibit at the Nebraska History Museum August 16, 2019 - January 2, 2021.

Related posts: "[Nebraska Next: The Fight to Enfranchise Nebraska Women](#)"; "[Women's History Month Resources](#)."

(Flag credit: History Nebraska 4622-14)

## Major: A Soldier Dog - a Fort Robinson WWII story for kids

August 1, 2019



A new children's book tells the story of a Nebraska-based World War II dog training program. *Major: A Soldier Dog* is told from a dog's perspective and filled with colorful illustrations based on a real dog and actual places and events. Published by Six Foot Press, the 40-page book is written for children in kindergarten through second grade.

More than 17,000 dogs trained for the Army's K-9 Corps at [Fort Robinson](#) in northwest Nebraska. The story fascinated author Trevor Jones, Director and CEO of History Nebraska.

"The war dog program at Fort Robinson is such a captivating part of Nebraska history, and we wanted to share it with children," Jones said. "The story of Major is based on the true story of a dog donated to the Dogs for Defense program and gives readers of all ages the chance to experience Nebraska history first-hand."

The Fort Robinson War Dog Training Center was established in September 1942. Families across the country donated their dogs, which were taught to be guards, scouts, messengers, and sled dogs. *Major: A Soldier Dog* follows Major through his heartbreaking separation from his family, his training at Fort Robinson, his war service in Italy, his return home, and a tearful reunion with his family.

Jones learned about Major while researching Fort Robinson's war dog records. The dog had been donated by the Moore family of Wahpeton, North Dakota. Jones contacted Sid Moore, who was only five years old when he climbed into the shipping crate to lure Major inside. Moore's memories became part of the story.





Because the story is told from Major's perspective, the words and pictures reflect the way a dog would perceive the world. Dogs rely first on smell, second on hearing, and last on sight. Illustrator Ming Hai used colors to show what Major would have smelled and heard to help children understand his world and experiences.

"Many of the illustrations are based on photos from our collections at History Nebraska," said Jones. "We wanted to make sure that the story was not only captivating but as historically accurate as possible."



*Major: A Soldier Dog* is available at History Nebraska sites, including the Fort Robinson History Center, the Nebraska History Museum, and Chimney Rock, as well as bookstores across the state. Books are also available at [history.nebraska.gov/publications/books](http://history.nebraska.gov/publications/books).

Here are a few photos of the Fort Robinson "K-9" facility from History Nebraska's collections:



Major arrived at the fort in a crate carrier like these. (RG2731-10-15)





Kennels at Fort Robinson. (RG2731-20-1)



"Staaaaaay..." (RG2731-20-1)





Not Major, but you can see photos of the real-life Major and Sid at the end of the book. (RG3790-4-3)

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## 150 Nebraska State Fairs

July 31, 2019



By David L. Bristow, Editor; video by Josh Beeman

Nebraskans will soon celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island, August 23-September 2. Here are some of our favorite state fair photos from the collections of History Nebraska from the first century or so of the fair--in a two-minute video linked above and photos and captions below.

Can you name the fair's five host cities, and the two years the fair was canceled? Nebraska City hosted a three-day territorial fair in 1859, and the first two state fairs were held there in 1868 and 1869.

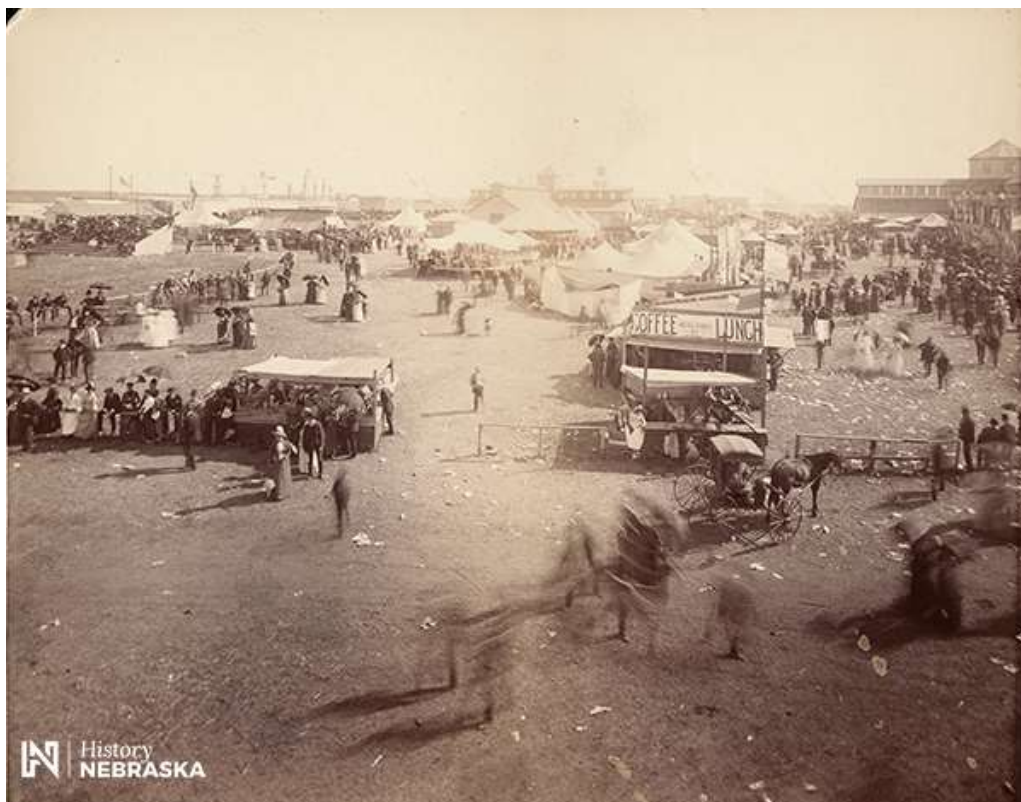


*Photo: Nebraska State Fair in Brownville, 1870. This was the first fair in Brownville, but the third state fair overall. History Nebraska RG 2304-3-6*

Brownville hosted for a few years, then Omaha and Lincoln switched back and forth until Lincoln became the fair's longtime home from 1901 to 2009. Grand Island has been the host city since 2010.

No fair was held in 1898 because host city Omaha was putting all its efforts into its Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition, a World's Fair-type event. And the US government suspended fairs in 1945 due to World War II.

From the beginning, fair promoters disagreed as to whether the fair was primarily about education or entertainment. In 1868, future Nebraska governor Robert Furnas of Brownville scolded readers of the *Nebraska Advertiser*: "Don't go into sideshows to see fat women, or a calf with two heads and eight legs, or any other monstrosities; but look at the stock, examine the points and make note of where you can purchase a fine Short Horn or Chester White, or any other desirable stock." At a time when the great majority of Nebraskans were farmers, Furnas believed that the fair's main purpose was to improve people's lives by improving agriculture.



*Photo: The fairgrounds in Lincoln in 1888. The widespread use of trash receptacles was still in the future.  
History Nebraska RG3356-3-3*

Meanwhile, gambling and liquor were allowed at the fair until 1879, and early newspapers complained of “indecent shows.” The popularity of horse races, entertainers, and carnival-style midways may have disappointed the purists, but the fair relied on the big crowds those events drew.

Even Furnas acknowledged that the fair offered “a week of recreation for every family,” and that “it happens on many farms that there is really no let up,” making it hard to get away. By the time they arrived at the fairgrounds, in other words, most Nebraskans believed they’d earned the right to enjoy themselves.





*A building made of alfalfa, Omaha, 1895. HN RG3356-49-2*



*Prize cattle, including one literally covered with ribbons, 1907. HN RG3356-0-747*



*Midway, 1909. HN RG3356-0-784*

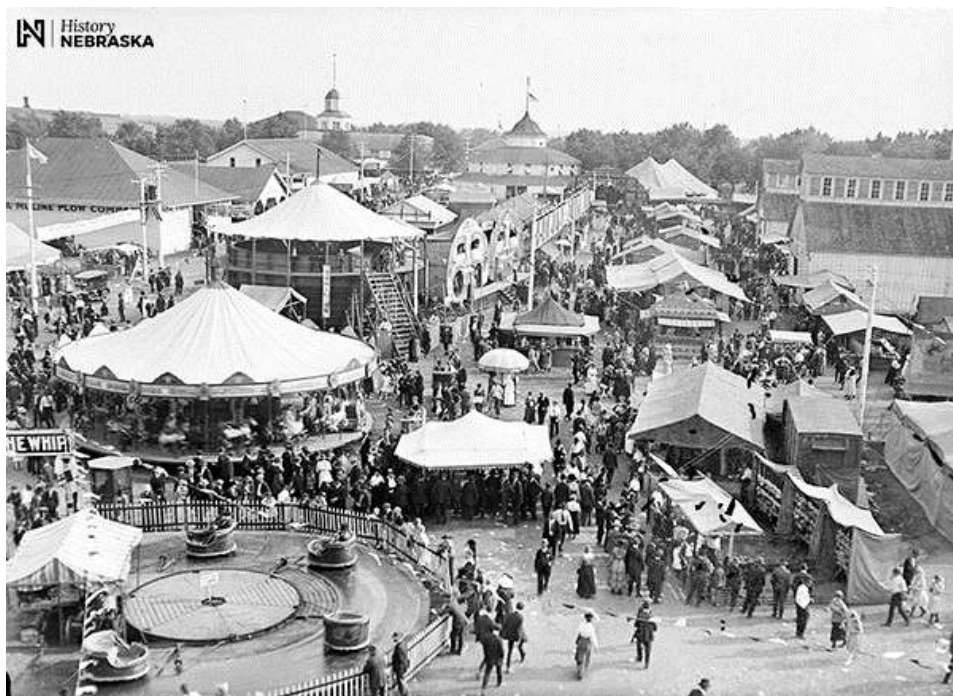


*Auto racing at the grandstand, 1914. HN RG3356-0-1-2*

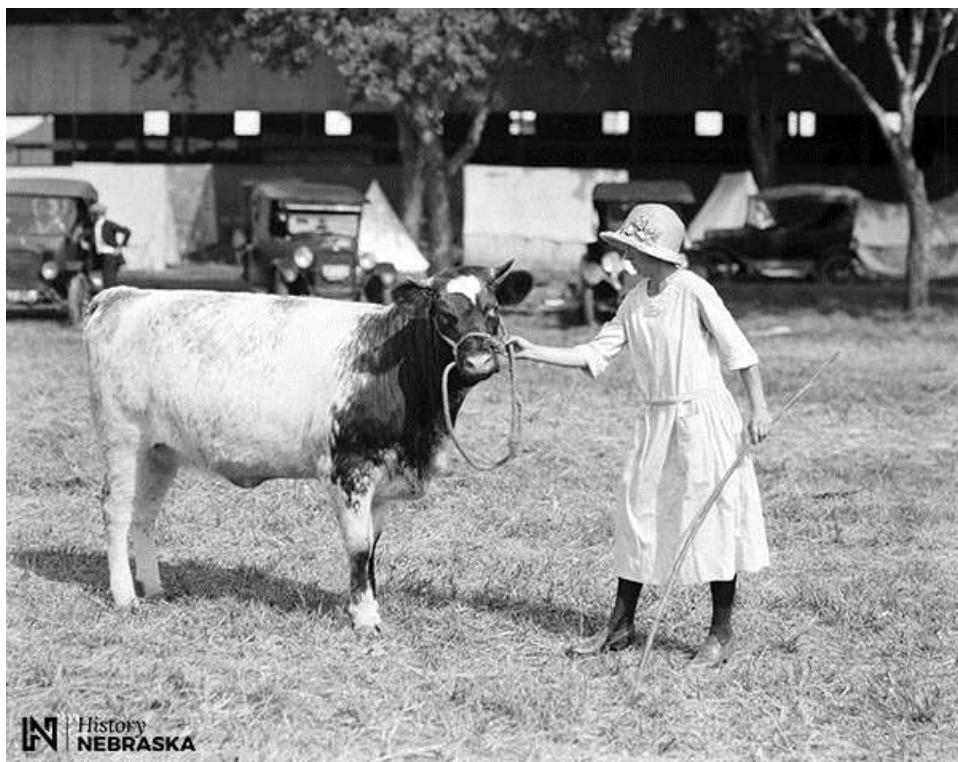




*Ties, long sleeves, and long skirts (though getting shorter), circa 1918. HN RG3356-5-21*



*Lincoln, 1920.*



*Beatrice Simmons of Cozad, 1st Heifer Calf Club, 1924. HN RG3356-22-4*



*The blue ribbon winners of the 4-H Style Show at the 1937 Nebraska State Fair. HN RG3356-62-83*



*You can't have a fair without fair food. Hamburger stand, 1946. HN RG2183-1946-904-1*



*The latest consumer products on display--televisions in 1949. HN RG2183-0-1049-9083*





*Cousins Allen Runge and Mary Runge, nap in a stall after busy day tending livestock at the 1950 fair. HN RG1783-34-11*



*Outside the burlesque theater, 1956. HN RG4107-2-66*



*Sprint car, 1962. HN RG5705-24-2*



*A "Thrillcade" acrobatic performance in front of the grandstand in 1963. HN RG5705-23-40*





*Fairgrounds in 1972. HN RG3356-38-18*